



Measurement of the Σ^- Charge Radius by Σ^- –Electron Elastic Scattering

The SELEX Collaboration

I. Eschrich^{i,1,2}, H. Krüger^{i,3}, J. Simon^{i,4}, K. Vorwalter^{i,5},
G. Alkhazov^k, A.G. Atamantchouk^{k,6}, M.Y. Balatz^{h,6},
N.F. Bondar^k, P.S. Cooper^e, L.J. Dauwe^q, G.V. Davidenko^h,
U. Dersch^{i,7}, G. Dirkes^{i,8}, A.G. Dolgolenko^h, G.B. Dzyubenko^h,
R. Edelstein^c, L. Emediato^s, A.M.F. Endler^d, J. Engelfried^{m,e},
C.O. Escobar^{s,9}, A.V. Evdokimov^h, I.S. Filimonov^{j,6},
F.G. Garcia^{s,e}, M. Gaspero^r, I. Giller^l, V.L. Golovtsov^k,
P. Gouffon^s, E. Gülmez^b, He Kangling^g, M. Iori^r, S.Y. Jun^c,
M. Kaya^p, J. Kilmer^e, V.T. Kim^k, L.M. Kochenda^k,
K. Königsmann^{i,10}, I. Konorov^{i,11}, A.P. Kozhevnikov^f,
A.G. Krivshich^k, M.A. Kubantsev^h, V.P. Kubarovsky^f,
A.I. Kulyavtsev^{c,13}, N.P. Kuropatkin^k, V.F. Kurshetsov^f,
A. Kushnirenko^c, S. Kwan^e, J. Lach^e, A. Lamberto^t,
L.G. Landsberg^f, I. Larin^h, E.M. Leikin^j, Li Yunshan^g,
M. Luksysⁿ, T. Lungov^{s,14}, V.P. Maleev^k, D. Mao^{c,13},
Mao Chensheng^g, Mao Zhenlin^g, S. Masciocchi^{i,12},
P. Mathew^{c,15}, M. Mattson^c, V. Matveev^h, E. McCliment^p,
M.A. Moinester^l, V.V. Molchanov^f, A. Morelos^m,
K.D. Nelson^{p,16}, A.V. Nemitkin^j, P.V. Neouistroev^k,
C. Newsom^p, A.P. Nilov^h, S.B. Nurushev^f, A. Ocherashvili^l,
Y. Onel^p, E. Ozel^p, S. Ozkorucuklu^p, A. Penzo^t,
S.V. Petrenko^f, P. Pogodin^p, B. Povhⁱ, M. Procario^{c,17},
V.A. Prutskoi^h, E. Ramberg^e, G.F. Rappazzo^t,
B.V. Razmyslovich^k, V.I. Rud^j, J. Russ^c, Y. Scheglovⁱ,
P. Schiavon^t, A.I. Sitnikov^h, D. Skow^e, V.J. Smith^o,
M. Srivastava^s, V. Steiner^l, V. Stepanov^k, L. Stutte^e,
M. Svoiski^k, N.K. Terentyev^{k,c}, G.P. Thomas^a, L.N. Uvarov^k,
A.N. Vasiliev^f, D.V. Vavilov^f, V.S. Verebryusov^h,
V.A. Victorov^f, V.E. Vishnyakov^h, A.A. Vorobyov^k, J. You^{c,e},

^a*Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306, U.S.A.*

^b*Bogazici University, Bebek 80815 Istanbul, Turkey*

^c*Carnegie-Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, U.S.A.*

^d*Centro Brasileiro de Pesquisas Físicas, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil*

^e*Fermilab, Batavia, IL 60510, U.S.A.*

^f*Institute for High Energy Physics, Protvino, Russia*

^g*Institute of High Energy Physics, Beijing, P.R. China*

^h*Institute of Theoretical and Experimental Physics, Moscow, Russia*

ⁱ*Max-Planck-Institut für Kernphysik, 69117 Heidelberg, Germany*

^j*Moscow State University, Moscow, Russia*

^k*Petersburg Nuclear Physics Institute, St. Petersburg, Russia*

^l*Tel Aviv University, 69978 Ramat Aviv, Israel*

^m*Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí, San Luis Potosí, Mexico*

ⁿ*Universidade Federal da Paraíba, Paraíba, Brazil*

^o*University of Bristol, Bristol BS8 1TL, United Kingdom*

^p*University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242, U.S.A.*

^q*University of Michigan-Flint, Flint, MI 48502, U.S.A.*

^r*University of Rome “La Sapienza” and INFN, Rome, Italy*

^s*University of São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil*

^t*University of Trieste and INFN, Trieste, Italy*

Abstract

The Σ^- mean squared charge radius has been measured in the space-like Q^2 range 0.035–0.105 GeV²/c² by elastic scattering of a Σ^- beam off atomic electrons. The measurement was performed with the SELEX (E781) spectrometer using the Fermilab hyperon beam at a mean energy of 610 GeV/c.

We obtain $\langle r_{ch}^2 \rangle_{\Sigma^-} = (0.61 \pm 0.12 (stat.) \pm 0.09 (syst.)) \text{ fm}^2$. The proton and π^- charge radii were measured as well and are consistent with results of other experiments. Our result agrees with the recently measured strong interaction radius of the Σ^- .

Key words: Electromagnetic form factors, elastic scattering, hadron-induced elastic scattering at high energy, hyperons, electron- Σ^- elastic scattering, Σ^- form factor, Σ^- charge radius, hadron strong and electromagnetic radii

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1 Introduction

The systematic measurement of the static properties of hadrons has led to a better understanding of their fundamental structure. However, their finite size – a consequence of the confinement of quarks inside a spatial volume – has not been thoroughly explored. Sizes of hadrons may be probed by their strong and electromagnetic interactions. Most commonly the electromagnetic charge radius is measured in elastic electron-hadron scattering. For unstable hadrons the inverse kinematics can be applied using a suitable hadronic beam. So far, electromagnetic radii have been established only for the proton [1], neutron [2], π^- [3], and K^- [4]. The difference between the pion and the kaon radius indicates a dependence on the strangeness content. A systematic study of the radii of hyperons with different strangeness will therefore enhance our understanding of the relative sizes of hadrons as bound quark systems. Theoretical predictions for the Σ^- charge radius have been divergent [5]. The most recent efforts suggest $\langle r_{ch}^2 \rangle_{\Sigma^-} = (0.67 \pm 0.03) \text{ fm}^2$ [6] on the one hand and $\langle r_{ch}^2 \rangle_{\Sigma^-} = (0.54 \pm 0.09) \text{ fm}^2$ [7] on the other. The feasibility of probing the Σ^- radius by inverse electron scattering has been demonstrated at CERN [8]. We present here the first high-statistics measurement of the Σ^- charge radius.

¹ Corresponding author. *E-mail:* ivo@slac.stanford.edu

² Now at Imperial College, London SW7 2BZ, U.K.

³ Present address: Boston Consulting Group, München, Germany

⁴ Present address: Siemens Medizintechnik, Erlangen, Germany

⁵ Present address: Deutsche Bank AG, Eschborn, Germany

⁶ deceased

⁷ Present address: Infineon Technologies AG, München, Germany

⁸ Now at University of Karlsruhe, Karlsruhe, Germany

⁹ Now at Instituto de Física da Universidade Estadual de Campinas, UNICAMP, SP, Brazil

¹⁰ Now at Universität Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany

¹¹ Now at Physik-Department, Technische Universität München, Garching, Germany

¹² Now at Max-Planck-Institut für Physik, München, Germany

¹³ Present address: Lucent Technologies, Naperville, IL

¹⁴ Now at Instituto de Física Teórica da Universidade Estadual Paulista, São Paulo, Brazil

¹⁵ Present address: SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL

¹⁶ Now at University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL 35294

¹⁷ Present address: DOE, Germantown, MD

2 The E781/SELEX Experiment

The primary objective of SELEX is the study of charm hadroproduction and spectroscopy of charm baryons in the forward hemisphere. The experiment was built as a 3-stage magnetic spectrometer as shown in Fig. 1. Here we only describe those features of the apparatus which are relevant to hadron-electron scattering.

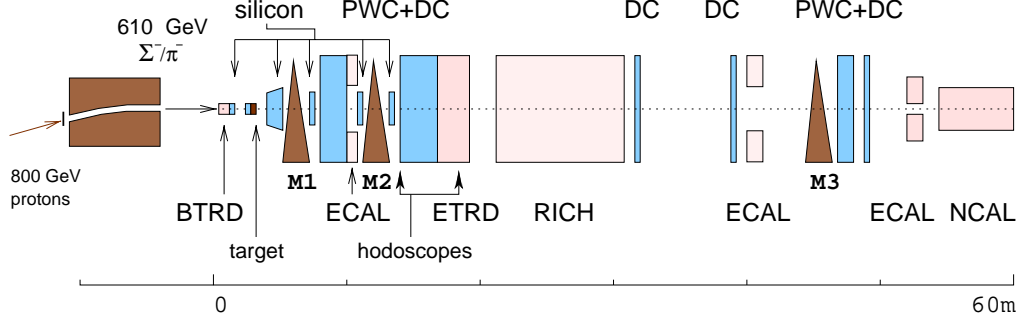


Fig. 1. Schematic layout of the SELEX apparatus [9]. The spectrometer stages are defined by the three magnets stylized as triangles. Transverse dimensions are not to scale.

The 800 GeV/ c proton beam from the Fermilab Tevatron was steered onto a Be target to produce a beam consisting of equal numbers of Σ^- and π^- at 610 GeV/ c mean momentum. The hyperon beam had a momentum spread of $\Delta p/p = 8\%$. Other constituents were 1 % Ξ^- and less than 0.1 % other particles. The magnet polarity could be reversed to provide a 540 GeV/ c beam containing 94 % protons and 3 % each of π^+ and Σ^+ . A transition radiation detector (BTRD) separated the baryonic from the mesonic beam components. Interactions took place in a target stack of two Cu and three C foils adding up to 4.2 % of an interaction length for protons. The first two magnets (M1, M2) implemented momentum cuts of 2.5 GeV/ c and 15 GeV/ c , respectively. Downstream of the second magnet a second transition radiation detector (ETRD) identified scattered electrons. Each stage of the spectrometer was equipped with a lead glass calorimeter (ECAL). Tracking information was provided by a combination of silicon microstrip detectors, proportional chambers (PWC), and drift chambers (DC).

Candidates for elastic scattering events were selected by a scintillator-based trigger requiring two charged particles in the M2 spectrometer both of which originated in the target area. The total multiplicity signal directly downstream of the targets was combined with the charge and multiplicity information from the hodoscope after magnet M2. The total charge was required to correspond to one beam particle plus one electron. An online filter refined this selection by checking for the same topology using particle tracks reconstructed in the

3 Kinematics

The differential cross section of the elastic scattering of a spin 1/2 baryon (mass M) off an electron (mass m) can be approximated by the relation ($\hbar = c = 1$) [10]

$$\frac{d\sigma}{dQ^2} = \frac{4\pi\alpha^2}{Q^4} \left(1 - \frac{Q^2}{Q_{max}^2}\right) F^2(Q^2) \quad (1)$$

up to corrections of the order $m^2/(s - M^2)$. Here, s denotes the center of mass energy and Q^2 the four momentum transfer from the hadron to the electron. Q^2 has a kinematically allowed maximum value which depends on the beam momentum. For instance, Q_{max}^2 is $0.2 \text{ GeV}^2/c^2$ for $610 \text{ GeV}/c$ Σ^- . For $m \ll M$ the squared form factor can be written as a combination of the electric and magnetic form factors $G_E(Q^2)$ and $G_M(Q^2)$:

$$F^2(Q^2) = \frac{G_E^2 + (Q^2/4M^2)G_M^2}{1 + (Q^2/4M^2)} + \frac{Q^4}{2(4M^2E^2 - (2ME + M^2)Q^2)} G_M^2, \quad (2)$$

with E being the beam energy in the laboratory frame. These form factors are normalized to the charge $G_E(0) = Z$ and the magnetic moment $G_M(0) = \mu$ of the baryon. The mean squared charge radius is defined by the relation

$$\langle r_{ch}^2 \rangle = \frac{-6}{G_E(0)} \left. \frac{dG_E}{dQ^2} \right|_{Q^2=0}. \quad (3)$$

At low momentum transfers $Q^2 \leq 0.1 \text{ GeV}^2/c^2$, both electric and magnetic form factors of the Σ^- can be parameterized by the dipole approximation:

$$\frac{G_E(Q^2)}{G_E(0)} = \frac{G_M(Q^2)}{G_M(0)} = D(Q^2) = \left(1 + \frac{\langle r_{ch}^2 \rangle Q^2}{12}\right)^{-2}. \quad (4)$$

A fit of equation (1) to the shape of the measured Q^2 distribution provides the information on $\langle r_{ch}^2 \rangle$ by means of equation (4).

4 Analysis and Results

Out of 77 million triggers with a Σ^- the events containing one electron were selected and the particle trajectories combined to check if they formed vertices inside the target material. The event was accepted if it contained exactly three tracks forming one vertex consisting of the beam track, the electron candidate, and the scattered hadron candidate.

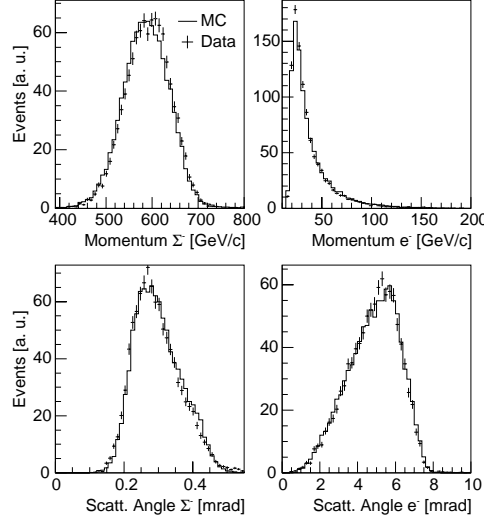


Fig. 2. Comparison of the elastic scattering observables in data and simulation.

At a given beam energy, momenta and scattering angles of the outgoing electron and hadron (Fig. 2) provide four observables to determine the four-momentum transfer from hadron to electron (Fig. 3a). As the measurement is overdetermined, the electron momentum could be ignored, thus avoiding sizable radiative corrections. This is an important advantage of the reversed method since in experiments with an electron beam the corrections for Bremsstrahlung have a direct influence on the result. The remaining radiative corrections to the Q^2 spectrum due to initial Bremsstrahlung loss are small, and show a variation of less than 0.2% in the Q^2 region used in this analysis. The momentum transfer was fitted to the remaining three observables. In the last stage of the event selection, both scattering angles and the momentum loss of the hadron were required to satisfy the constraints imposed by elastic kinematics.

Using a GEANT simulation, the spectrum was corrected for acceptance effects of the experimental setup. Due to trigger constraints, the acceptance is limited to Q^2 from 0.01 to 0.2 GeV^2/c^2 . It is constant between 0.035 and 0.11 GeV^2/c^2 (Fig. 3b). To account for kinematic effects from varying beam energy, each event has been weighted by the cross section for a point like baryon with the magnetic moment of the Σ^- .

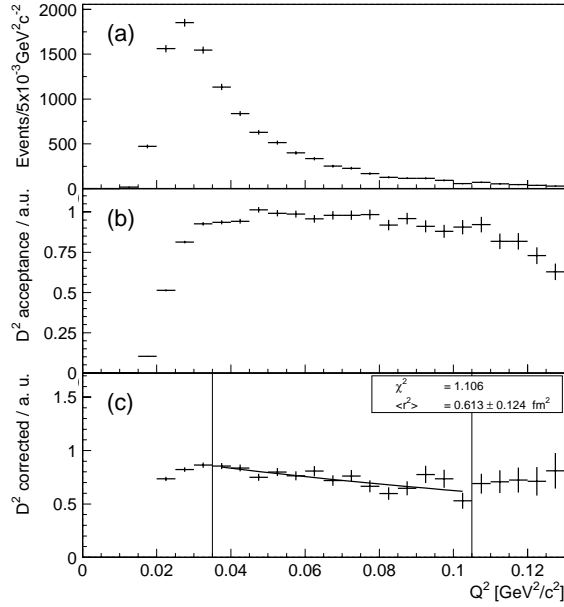


Fig. 3. (a) Q^2 distribution of the final event sample. (b) Acceptance function applied to a constant dipole term $D^2(Q^2)$. (c) Fit to $D^2(Q^2)$ extracted from data corrected for acceptance. Vertical lines indicate boundaries of fit. D^2 is given in arbitrary units, statistical error only.

The weighted Q^2 spectrum of the dipole form factor squared is shown in Fig. 3c. The fit of $D^2(Q^2)$ was restricted to the Q^2 region where the acceptance is flat. The systematic error (table 1) is dominated by the choice of cuts on kinematic variables on one hand and the choice of fit boundaries on the other. Other contributors are the distortion of the Q^2 spectrum by histogram binning and beam contamination.

Table 1

Contributions to the systematic error of $\langle r_{ch}^2 \rangle_{\Sigma^-}$ (in fm^2).

Cuts on kinematic variables	0.04
Choice of fit boundaries	0.04
Histogram binning effects	0.03
Beam contamination	0.01

The final sample contained 5010 events at Q^2 between $0.035 \text{ GeV}^2/c^2$ and $0.105 \text{ GeV}^2/c^2$, corresponding to 4 % of elastic Σ^- -electron events expected in this interval. The efficiency of this measurement was mainly limited by trigger (23 %) and reconstruction efficiencies (21 %). Background from Ξ^- -electron scattering was estimated to be present in far less than one percent of the final event sample. A different class of background can be caused by events of the form $\Sigma^- \pi^0 \rightarrow \Sigma^- \gamma e^- e^+$. If the positron is not detected due to early absorption or tracking inefficiency, the event topology can appear to be similar to Σ^- -electron scattering. Events of this kind have been observed

in early SELEX data where the interaction counter had been mistuned. The invariant mass of reconstructed electrons and photons in the ECAL shows no evidence of such events in the final event sample.

Our result for the mean squared Σ^- electromagnetic radius is [11]

$$\langle r_{ch}^2 \rangle_{\Sigma^-} = (0.61 \pm 0.12 (stat.) \pm 0.09 (syst.)) \text{ fm}^2.$$

With the same setup, the electromagnetic mean squared proton radius was measured [12] to be

$$\langle r_{ch}^2 \rangle_p = (0.69 \pm 0.06 (stat.) \pm 0.06 (syst.)) \text{ fm}^2,$$

which is in good agreement with results from elastic ep scattering experiments (overall $\langle r_{ch}^2 \rangle_p = 0.77 \pm 0.03 \text{ fm}^2$ [1]. Ref. [13] finds $\langle r_{ch}^2 \rangle_p = 0.67 \pm 0.02 \text{ fm}^2$ from data in a Q^2 range that overlaps well with ours). In addition we have determined the π^- charge radius from SELEX data [14]. Our result,

$$\langle r_{ch}^2 \rangle_{\pi^-} = (0.42 \pm 0.06 (stat.) \pm 0.08 (syst.)) \text{ fm}^2,$$

is consistent with the results of other experiments [3].

5 Discussion and Conclusion

To put our results in perspective, we compare the electromagnetic charge radii to radii derived from total hadron-proton cross sections (strong interaction radii [5], Fig. 4). The latter have been normalized to the charge radius of the proton as measured by SELEX at $\sqrt{s} = 34 \text{ GeV}$ and the total pp cross section [15] interpolated to this energy. Both the Σ^- and π^- strong interaction radii are calculated from total cross sections measured by SELEX [16] as well. The radii of the proton, Σ^- , and π^- are therefore free of systematic error in respect to each other, and only statistical errors are displayed in Fig. 4.

For reference we added the K^- charge radius [4] as well as the strong interaction radii of K^- and Ξ^- to Fig. 4. The K^- strong interaction radius was extrapolated to SELEX energy using the Particle Data Group's parameterization of the K^-p total cross section [15]. For the Ξ^- we used the radius determined at $\sqrt{s} = 16 \text{ GeV}$ [17]. It was not scaled to SELEX energy for lack of Ξ^-p cross section data.

We conclude that our results for the electromagnetic charge radii of proton, Σ^- , and π^- agree with the values of their strong interaction radii. They also confirm the charge radii reported by previous experiments. The Σ^- charge

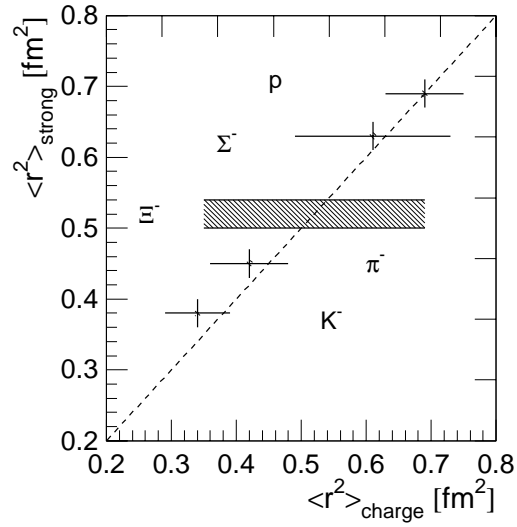


Fig. 4. Comparison of strong and electromagnetic radii for proton, Σ^- , and π^- from SELEX data for which only statistical errors are displayed. Equality of strong interaction and charge radius is indicated by the dashed line. The radii of K^- and Ξ^- from other experiments are included for reference (see also table 2).

radius is comparable within errors to that of the proton, yet compatible with a smaller value as suggested by the trend indicated by strong interaction radii.

Table 2

Electromagnetic and strong interaction radii shown in Fig. 4.

	Electromagnetic radius [fm^2]	Strong interaction radius [fm^2]
p	0.69 ± 0.06	0.69 ± 0.02
Σ^-	0.61 ± 0.12	0.63 ± 0.02
π^-	0.42 ± 0.06	0.45 ± 0.02
K^-	0.34 ± 0.05	0.38 ± 0.02
Ξ^-		0.52 ± 0.02

Our result for the Σ^- is at this point the best direct measurement of the charge radius of a charged baryon other than the proton. With this experiment we have proven that it is possible to measure baryon charge radii in inverse kinematics. Due to the Q^4 behavior of the differential cross section the accuracy of the final result is limited by the low statistics towards higher Q^2 . In a dedicated experiment it would be possible to extend trigger and reconstruction to both lower and higher Q^2 , allowing for increased statistics and better control of the systematics.

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